

**What is claimed:**

1. A portable balloon launcher system for inflating and launching a balloon, comprising:

5 launch platform means for creating a surface on which an uninflated balloon can be placed;

launch bag means for securing said uninflated balloon to said launch platform; and

10 launch bag opening means for controllably releasing said balloon.

2. The portable balloon launcher system of claim 1 wherein said launch platform means comprises:

case means for providing an enclosed space for the storage and transport of said uninflated balloon;

15 extendible leg means, having a first end and a second end, said first end being secured to said case means, for supporting said case means at a predetermined height; and

20 folding shelf means attached to an interior surface of said case means and deployable to create a surface on which said uninflated balloon can be placed.

3. The portable balloon launcher system of claim 2 wherein said launch platform means further comprises:

25 launch bag attachment means for providing a plurality of points at which said launch bag means can be secured to said launch platform means.

4. The portable balloon launcher system of claim 3 wherein said launch bag means comprises:

30 a substantially cylindrical enclosure formed of an expandable material to accommodate said uninflated balloon and securely hold said uninflated balloon through all stages of inflation to full inflation.

5. The portable balloon launcher system of claim 4 wherein said launch bag means further comprises:

launch bag attachment means for providing a plurality of points at which said launch bag means can be secured to said launch platform means.

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6. The portable balloon launcher system of claim 1 wherein said launch bag means comprises:

a substantially cylindrical enclosure formed of an expandable material to accommodate said uninflated balloon and securely hold said uninflated balloon through all stages of inflation to full inflation.

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7. The portable balloon launcher system of claim 6 wherein said launch bag opening means comprises:

zipper means formed along a lengthwise side of said substantially cylindrical enclosure to enable said substantially cylindrical enclosure to be opened to release said balloon when inflated.

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8. The portable balloon launcher system of claim 1 wherein said launch platform comprises:

zipper means formed along a lengthwise side of said launch bag means to enable said launch bag means to be opened to release said balloon when inflated.

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9. A method of inflating and launching a balloon, comprising the steps of: deploying a launch platform to create a surface on which an uninflated balloon can be placed;

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securing a launch bag to said launch platform;

inserting an uninflated balloon in said launch bag to secure said uninflated balloon to said launch platform; and

controllably releasing said balloon from said launch bag.

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10. The method of inflating and launching a balloon of claim 9 wherein said launch platform comprises a case for providing an enclosed space for the storage and transport of said uninflated balloon, said step of deploying comprises:

5 extending a plurality of legs, having a first end and a second end with said first end being secured to said case, for supporting said case at a predetermined height; and

deploying at least one folding shelf that is attached to an interior surface of said case to create a surface on which said uninflated balloon can be placed.

10 11. The method of inflating and launching a balloon of claim 10 wherein said step of deploying further comprises:

attaching said launch bag to said launch platform at a plurality of points.

15 12. The method of inflating and launching a balloon of claim 11 wherein said launch bag comprises a substantially cylindrical enclosure formed of an expandable material to accommodate said uninflated balloon and securely hold said uninflated balloon through all stages of inflation to full inflation and said substantially cylindrical enclosure includes a zipper formed along a side of said substantially cylindrical enclosure, said step of controllably releasing said balloon comprises:

20 operating said zipper to open said substantially cylindrical enclosure to release said inflated balloon from said launch bag.